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FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

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FIRST COMMITTEE
9th meeting
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at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ELARABY (Egypt)

later: Mr. PATOKALLIO (Vice-Chairman) (Finland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 65; 68 and 142; and 67 and 69 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Miss RIVERA (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): As this is the first time our delegation has spoken here at this session, may I be allowed to express to you, Sir, our pleasure at your unanimous election as Chairman of this important Committee. We should like also to congratulate the other officers of the Committee. You may rest assured, Sir, that you will enjoy the cooperation of Costa Rica in the work of the Committee.

We have now entered a new era in international relations. We have witnessed the significant momentum provided by disarmament negotiations and agreements which are providing the foundation for the building of a new world order of peace, security and cooperation. The setting up of the Register of Conventional Arms, which promotes greater access to objective information on military matters, transparency and restraint in armaments, is a major achievement in disarmament at the world-wide level.

We believe that this will promote a reasonable balance in armaments and the military, reducing them to the lowest possible level, and make a contribution in future negotiations by States in the fields of security, verification, control, reduction and conversion of armaments.

An example of the desire of States to create a model of regional security, based on a reasonable balance of forces and the strengthening of civilian power, is the Tegucigalpa Protocol, which was signed at the eleventh summit meeting of the Central American Presidents. This model, which is still being worked on, is the result of regional disarmament efforts in Central America.

(Miss Rivera, Costa Rica)

The Esquipulas process gave rise to two historic stages in building regional peace: one stage promoted an internal settlement of the Central American conflict by the democratic means of national reconciliation; and the other laid the foundation for the establishment of a security commission entrusted with establishing guidelines to achieve regional disarmament, with the goal of concluding an agreement on security, verification and the limitation of arms and the military in the region.

That is why Costa Rica has supported the efforts of that Commission, which decided to create a technical subcommittee; that technical body has prepared a model for reporting on military inventories, defined the elements likely to lead to the establishment of a proportional balance of forces in the region and, with the assistance of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, created machinery for the verification of inventories in keeping with the needs of the five Central American countries.

This has already yielded results, for Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras have already submitted their military inventories to the bodies I have already mentioned, so that these may be open for inspection once all such inventories have been presented.

The elimination of chemical weapons is another matter of great interest to my country. We welcomed the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament to reach agreement on a draft Convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. This draft Convention - a contribution to international peace and security - is the first multilateral disarmament agreement with an effective verification regime by means of which a whole category of weapons of mass destruction can be eliminated.

(Miss Rivera, Costa Rica)

In accordance with Article 1 of the draft Convention, each State Party undertakes never under any circumstances: (a) to develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons, or transfer, directly or indirectly, chemical weapons to anyone; (b) to use chemical weapons; (c) to engage in any military preparations to use chemical weapons; (d) to assist, encourage or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Convention.

We are pleased that the Conference on Disarmament has submitted to the First Committee for consideration a draft Convention on chemical weapons. In this connection my delegation has joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1, and we invite all delegations to do likewise.

We consider that this historic multilateral instrument, which will be signed in Paris in 1993, will open up bright prospects in the not-too-distant future for the achievement of another agreement, one on nuclear disarmament dealing with a ban on nuclear tests and the production and deployment of nuclear weapons.

In this context, the process of reversing the nuclear-arms race has been significantly advanced: France, the United States and the Russian Federation have taken unilateral decisions temporarily to suspend nuclear tests - a measure we consider will promote further efforts to bring about a total test ban, thus making a reality the amendment proposed at the Amendment Conference of the States Parties to the partial nuclear-test-ban Treaty.

The disarmament agreement signed in Washington in June 1992 by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin on reducing strategic weapons, which is a landmark in the history of nuclear disarmament, is a courageous visionary step towards a world with fewer weapons and greater economic and social development.

(Miss Rivera, Costa Rica)

In the Latin American context, we should like to point to the consolidation of the denuclearization regime, as laid down in the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. In this connection we were pleased at the ratification of Additional Protocol 1 by France, and we welcome the amendments introduced by Argentina, Brazil and Chile, which were approved by the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (OPANAL) and will soon make it possible for the full entry into force of the Treaty.

My delegation believes that we must forthwith give further momentum to efforts at education for peace. A greater awareness of the significance of weapons and aggressive acts should be promoted in the education programmes of schools, colleges and universities, with the aim of teaching how to resolve problems by peaceful means. As is stated in the preamble to the constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):

"since wars began in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".

(Miss Rivera, Costa Rica)

In 1989 my country presented a draft resolution on the subject, entitled "education and information for disarmament". That draft resolution called on the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the current state of education for disarmament taking into account the reports of Member States and international governmental and non-governmental organizations, and based on information available from teaching institutions of education for peace and disarmament.

It was with pleasure that, in 1991, we received the Secretary-General's report, which contains positive responses in this respect. However, we feel that efforts must be redoubled and that last year's resolution will have to be followed up at the next session of the General Assembly. We hope that by that time the reports requested in last year's resolution will have been submitted in accordance with paragraphs 5 and 6 of that resolution.

We congratulate the educational communities on their efforts in the preparation of programmes, studies and activities on education for disarmament and peace. This is a means of contributing to the implementation of resolution 44/123 of 15 December 1989 and resolution 46/27 of 6 December 1991.

My delegation is of the opinion that the World Disarmament Campaign plays an important role in educational efforts in support of disarmament. It enables Member States to carry out important programmes within their own education systems and as a part of their cultural development. In this connection I am pleased to report that in November my country will observe the Second Disarmament Week, during which the subject under discussion will be the abolition of nuclear weapons. This is in recognition of the recent decision to include the city of Cartago, Costa Rica, in the "Programme to Promote the Solidarity of Cities towards the Total Abolition of Nuclear Weapons". In

(Miss Rivera, Costa Rica)

addition, on 17 September 1992 that city was officially registered as a member of "The World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-City Solidarity".

In conclusion, my delegation considers that the work, efforts and decisions of the First Committee make us participants in the building of a world of peace, security and cooperation.

Mr. VAJPAYEE (India): The Indian delegation is heartened to see you, Mr. Chairman - the distinguished representative of Egypt, with which India has traditional close ties - presiding over our work. My delegation would like to congratulate you, as well as the other officers of the Committee, on your elections. We assure you of our full cooperation in your efforts to achieve successful results in the discharge of your responsibilities.

Since we last met - in 1991 - much that commands attention has happened in the field of disarmament and international security. We are beginning to get accustomed to living in a world free from ideological confrontation. Happily, the cold war and the East-West conflict are aberrations of the past. The conclusion of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States of America and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a historic development, which demonstrates that even the most complex issues can be resolved, given the necessary political will to achieve nuclear disarmament.

The dangers emerging from the split control of nuclear weapons provides the international community with yet another reminder of the need to rid the world of the nuclear threat. In June this year the United States of America and the Russian Federation announced significant proposals in the field of the unilateral reduction of nuclear arms - proposals that India has welcomed enthusiastically. We hope that the proposals of both countries for

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

substantial cuts in key categories of nuclear arms will be followed by more far-reaching, deeper and quicker reduction measures, not only in the United States and the Russian Federation but also in other nuclear-weapon States in the shape of matching, concrete steps in this direction.

After many years of slow, often somnolent, negotiation the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva has adopted a draft Convention banning the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and providing for the destruction of such weapons. However, the shadow of conflict, suffering and refugee flows looms large in many areas of the world. Ethnic, sectarian, terrorist and subversive tendencies threaten to keep the world unsafe. We cannot, therefore, be complacent or euphoric.

The conclusion of negotiations on a total and verifiable ban on chemical weapons is a significant step in the field of multilateral disarmament. It is important that the Convention on chemical weapons outlaws an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. India hopes to be among the first countries to sign the Convention on chemical weapons. If that Convention is to command healthy universality the many apprehensions that the developing countries expressed during the negotiations will have to be borne in mind.

Most importantly, any intention on the part of States Parties to the Convention to continue dual regimes of controls after its entry into force would be contrary to its spirit and to the understandings reached in respect of Article XI. The Convention should not under any circumstances be used to deny the developing countries unhindered access to peaceful technology in the chemical field or to supplies of chemicals, equipment or materials.

After the Convention enters into force, there should be no place for restrictions on international cooperation or for export controls by States parties acting separately or together outside the Convention, as the

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

Convention contains effective measures to prevent chemical-weapons proliferation of any type, as well as provisions for sanctions against potential violators.

In a statement made on 6 August 1992 in the Conference on Disarmament, members of the Australia Group undertook to review their existing national regulations in the field of chemicals and equipment, for the purpose of achieving this aim and making an active contribution towards securing an increase in the commercial and technological exchanges between States parties to the Convention. It is our earnest hope that the commitment underlying the statement will be honoured fully and promptly. We hope also that the Australia Group will dissolve itself, both in letter and in spirit. We believe that such a step would promote healthy universality and credibility for this Convention.

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

Much has been said about the value of the chemical weapons Convention and its precedent-setting role for future globally negotiated multilateral regimes. It is true that verification is considered by many to be the core issue of the chemical weapons Convention. Many years of negotiations have resulted in establishing a balance between verification on the one hand and national sovereignty and security on the other. These achievements will remain the basic guiding light for verification regimes in future disarmament treaties and conventions. What is important, however, is the precedent-setting significance of the Convention itself. The goal of the international community to eliminate nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, being weapons of mass destruction, has been reiterated on a number of occasions. Humankind is still in danger of extinction by nuclear weapons whose possessors are as yet under no legal obligation to destroy them totally or eliminate them since no non-discriminatory multilateral or international regime on the elimination of nuclear weapons exists. As a globally negotiated regime with an effective verification, the chemical weapons Convention provides an excellent precedent for working on a similarly negotiated verifiable convention on nuclear weapons and deserves emulation.

With the end of the cold war, the validity of strategies based on possession and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons has come under renewed scrutiny. However, the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body, has been unable to commence actual negotiations on any of the crucial nuclear disarmament issues. Bilateralism and multilateralism cannot be mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they must complement, facilitate and reinforce each other. In the post-cold-war scenario, serious consideration needs to be given to the attitudes, policies, doctrines, institutions and instruments required for a nuclear-weapon-free

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

world. If we are to rid the world of the threat of nuclear annihilation, there is a pressing need for changing the attitude that the spread of nuclear-weapons capability to "delinquent" third-world States is the sole danger area with regard to nuclear proliferation. Closed-door "clubs" and "regimes" created to impose restrictions on the trade in technology, equipment and material on a discriminatory basis will not solve proliferation problems. The only way is to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction and thereby the threat emanating from them. This cannot be achieved by arms-reduction proposals and initiatives which in reality only preserve the monopoly of a few States. It requires old attitudes to be discarded. It also requires the world to rise above these limited initiatives and to work towards truly global and non-discriminatory measures for nuclear disarmament, and uniform standards to be applied to all countries.

It is indeed significant that the next review of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty will follow closely the coming into force of the non-discriminatory and multilaterally negotiated chemical weapons Convention. India has played a pioneering role in placing the issue of non-proliferation on the agenda of the General Assembly. Along with seven other countries, India proposed a non-proliferation treaty in 1965, in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX), which was global in approach and non-discriminatory. Unfortunately, the 1968 non-proliferation Treaty failed to provide an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations between nuclear and non-nuclear States. The real issue today is not the non-proliferation Treaty or its extension. The real issue is how to end the prospects of proliferation and eliminate nuclear weapons. The Review Conference should provide an opportunity to look seriously at the problems of proliferation, the Treaty provisions, its role and its relevance in the context of the overall

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

objective of achieving genuine non-proliferation and of eliminating nuclear weapons, just as the elimination of chemical weapons is to be achieved through the chemical weapons Convention. There is an urgent need to take into account today's reality in dealing with non-proliferation and to provide an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States in order to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons in a time-bound frame.

The world has acknowledged that chemical and biological weapons are a matter of universal concern and have to be dealt with globally. Similarly, nuclear weapons and the nuclear threat cannot be addressed without a global approach. The proposals presented by India at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1988, for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in stages to achieve ultimately equal security for all have become even more relevant today. The programme of action, which proposes the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in a systematic, rational and practical time-frame, aims at achieving in relation to nuclear weapons what has already been achieved in the field of chemical and biological weapons. It recognizes the need for flexibility in the staging of these measures. It calls upon all States - nuclear, threshold and others - to accept equal obligations without discrimination. It provides for step-by-step achievement of the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. When the action plan was put forward, some difficulties were expressed about accepting these ideas, owing to the background of the cold war. Since that era is over, East and West, North and South must turn to building a structure of peace based not on destructive capabilities but on constructive economic growth. Now that some of the measures envisaged in the plan have already been initiated, every effort should be made to realize a world free of nuclear weapons by the end of

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

this century. That would constitute a true victory over the cold war. We urge others who believe in the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons to make this programme workable through positive contributions and suggestions.

For many years India has proposed, both at the Conference on Disarmament and at the General Assembly, that a convention outlawing the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a necessary first step for the elimination of these weapons and for the prevention of nuclear war. Nuclear-weapon States themselves have visualized the possible failure of technology systems on which human beings rely and have undertaken steps to prevent the outbreak of accidental wars. A convention on the non-use of nuclear weapons not only will remove this threat but will also remove the justification for nuclear weapons. The sentiment already expressed that a nuclear war must not be fought needs to be formalized as a multilateral commitment.

Closely linked to the idea of a convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to apply an immediate freeze on the production of these weapons and fissile material for weapons purposes. If fissile material released from dismantling warheads is recycled into more advanced weapons systems, the political momentum that has been generated by the successful Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty) and the recent proposals of the United States of America and the Russian Federation regarding further reduction in nuclear warheads will be neutralized. This momentum needs to be carried to its logical conclusion through multilateral negotiations with the participation of other nuclear-weapon States.

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

The issue of a nuclear-test ban has assumed increased importance in the present-day context. Useful groundwork has already been undertaken on this issue in the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva towards reaching the stage of negotiating a nuclear-test-ban treaty. We are encouraged that an early conclusion of such a treaty is now advocated not only by the Russian Federation, but also by several other countries in Europe. We welcome the decision taken by the Russian Federation and France to observe a limited moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests, as well as other constraints on nuclear testing approved by the United States Legislature. It is important that all nuclear-weapon States respond positively to these announcements of unilateral moratoriums, thereby creating a positive environment for negotiations to be undertaken for a nuclear-test-ban Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. It is our earnest hope that the Conference on Disarmament will arrive at a consensus at the beginning of its 1993 session on the modalities of such negotiations.

The report of the Secretary-General made available at the forty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly - document A/45/568 - had clearly brought out the fact that new scientific and technological developments and their application in the deployment of new weapons and weapons systems would adversely affect the international security environment, and that complex technical problems would make a search for verification even more elusive. Given the fact that there are no barriers to knowledge, what is achieved by a handful of States today can be adopted by many more in the future. Since 1988 therefore India, with other like-minded delegations, has been submitting a resolution that appeals for a collective agreement on the non-pursuit of certain paths that could have a destabilizing effect on the global security environment, rendering existing arms limitations meaningless.

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

Scientific and technological developments must be channelled towards peaceful uses. In our working paper on new technologies and the qualitative arms race, presented at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, we had outlined our suggestions in concrete terms. At the 1990 session of the Disarmament Commission, India presented a working paper (A/CN.10/147) on this subject, in which it also suggested specific action in different fields. This aspect of disarmament is, unfortunately, ignored, while attention is concentrated on creating discriminatory regimes that impose unilateral restrictions on trade with developing countries in dual-use technology, equipment and materials. The effect of such arbitrary export controls is to retard their development and economic growth. To justify these by hypothesizing potential threats from developing countries is to introduce a dangerous North-South dimension to disarmament, a state of affairs which should be avoided. India has therefore supported the ideas contained in working paper A/CN.10/145, presented by Argentina and Brazil at the 1992 session of the Disarmament Commission, and also co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 46/38 D on this subject. We believe that collective multilateral action on the non-pursuit of certain paths will encourage scientific and technological developments in the field of sensors, communications and computing capabilities, which can have immensely beneficial implications for the verification of disarmament agreements and for the protection of the environment.

Outer space has been recognized by the international community as the common heritage of mankind. If the benefits from space research and technology are to accrue to all countries in the field of communications, meteorology and remote sensing, outer space has to be kept free of all weapons

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

and new weapons systems. New legal instruments that would reflect political reality, as well as new technological developments, are needed.

The international environment has become more responsive to the contribution of confidence-building measures in safeguarding international peace and security. With its long-standing commitment to peaceful coexistence, India has set into motion a process of instituting confidence-building measures with its neighbours, with the objectives of providing an assurance of non-aggressive intent, preventing any attempts at misrepresentation of regular activities for political ends, reducing the likelihood of the escalation of tensions, and creating an environment for the reduction of weapons through negotiations.

In recent months, high-level political contacts between India and China have resulted in a number of measures to avoid any tension along our borders, including regular meetings of border personnel, the establishment of supporting communication links at border points, and prior intimation of military exercises. With Pakistan, at the first round of talks held in July 1990 at the level of foreign secretary, India put forward an integrated package of confidence-building measures in the political, communications and technical fields. It provided for information-sharing on military exercises as a measure for promoting transparency and reducing misapprehensions, improving communications among military commanders, joint border patrolling, exchanges of delegations of armed forces and, at the political level, reiteration and reaffirmation of the settling of disputes through peaceful means and bilateral negotiations, ceasing hostile propaganda, respecting the line of actual control and refraining from acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful, harmonious relations and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The six rounds of talks at the level of foreign secretary

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

have focused on carrying forward elements of the package of confidence-building measures. Agreements have been signed on advance notice on military exercises, manoeuvres and troop movements, prevention of airspace violations and permitting overflights and landings by military aircraft, and the setting up of hotlines for contact on a weekly basis between the directors general of military operations of the two sides. At the fifth round of talks, at the level of foreign secretar , it was agreed that India and Pakistan would consider issuing a joint declaration on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Such a declaration was issued at the conclusion of the sixth round of talks at the level of foreign secretary. Under this declaration, both countries have undertaken not to develop, produce, acquire or use chemical weapons, and to refrain from assisting or encouraging others to do so.

Both countries have also reiterated their resolve to become original States parties to the chemical weapons Convention. An agreement between India and Pakistan on the prohibition of attacks on each other's nuclear facilities was signed in December 1988, and the list of these nuclear facilities was finally exchanged under this agreement on 1 January 1992. Bilateral cooperation in diverse fields with other neighbours, including the military sector, and on the border areas, has also been stepped up. Confidence must be enhanced on all fronts and in tandem if security is to be enhanced. Continuance of hostile acts and inflammatory statements diminish the value of political confidence-building measures. India will continue its efforts at building upon the existing confidence-building measures in a step-by-step and realistic manner.

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

While the regional approach can supplement and help in global efforts in the priority fields of disarmament, the definition of a region must encompass the full range of security concerns of the countries involved, as well as the practicability of the specific measures of disarmament suggested in this context.

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

Since nations perceive their security indivisibly, compartmentalizing security through artificially designated regions cannot work. Each region has to be clearly defined with the full consensus of the participating States. Agreements have to be arrived at freely among the States concerned, taking into account the characteristics of the region. Essential prerequisites for any such arrangements are scrupulous adherence to the basic principles of international relations, such as non-interference in internal affairs, non-incitement to terrorism, secessionism or subversion, and appropriate confidence-building measures, which in turn could lead to disarmament measures.

The arms build-up, which spirals because of the increased military expenditures of the big military spenders and exporters, affects developing countries doubly: first, the increasing expenditure on armaments reduces the resources available for economic development and growth; and, secondly, it fuels further competitive expenditure on defence requirements for the security needs of the developing countries.

India is supportive of steps to curb this trend both at the national and the global levels. We ourselves have taken steps in this direction by decreasing our overall annual budget outlays in the recent past and decreasing defence spending in per capita terms and as a proportion of gross domestic product to approximately 3.5 per cent. The success of these efforts will depend to a large extent on the restraints that major arms exporters are able to impose on their exports of arms. It will also depend on the curbing of military aid and the purchase of weapons. It will necessarily have to be ensured that arms freed as a result of disarmament measures in one region are not diverted to other countries or organizations. It is in this regard that India has supported the proposal of a United Nations arms Register which would make arms transfer among countries more transparent.

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

As a member of the Panel of Experts who have prepared a report on the future modalities on the functioning of the register, we are convinced that the exercise would need a step-by-step approach. An important dimension of transparency in armaments is the illicit arms trade, which is most distinct and dangerous because of its destabilizing and destructive effects through the fuelling of phenomena like terrorism, subversion and drug trafficking. The universal and non-discriminatory aspects of the United Nations Register on arms transfers must be emphasized, and obligations assumed must be implemented simultaneously by all Member States.

We also note with concern that the hope of many developing countries that arms-limitation and universal restraints as well as cuts in nuclear armaments will generate the peace dividend to be channelled for productive and development-oriented needs has not been realized. Disarmament will have to be viewed in the broader context of the eradication of poverty and the promotion of development throughout the world.

Apprehensions have been expressed about the diminishing role of the Conference on Disarmament after the chemical weapons Convention. My delegation does not share these apprehensions. There are a number of items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament that are as important as the chemical weapons Convention, and the Conference on Disarmament will contribute greatly to the disarmament process by taking them up for negotiation. There is no lack of agenda items to be negotiated. The danger lies in the lack of political will, fear of transparency and deliberate downgrading of the multilateral process in priority areas of disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament should be allowed to fulfil its role as a negotiating forum, and next year concentrate on concrete negotiations on its agenda item 1, "Nuclear test ban". Given the positive international climate

(Mr. Vajpayee, India)

and the political will, it is our hope that the Conference on Disarmament will be revitalized as a negotiating forum for nuclear disarmament.

Mr. SAETHER (Norway): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. I should also like to extend my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. I am convinced that under your able guidance we will have fruitful and constructive deliberations in the First Committee at this session.

We are meeting at a time of both promise and uncertainty. We are leaving behind a world that was divided into antagonistic blocs and competing socio-economic systems and are entering a new historic period in which we must seek new stability in an environment fraught with ethnic and religious strife. At the same time the focus of our security efforts is in the process of being extended from military considerations to encompass ecological and economic factors as well. Poverty, environmental degradation and mass migration are forcing countries to work together in the knowledge that it is only through such common efforts that our future security can be forged.

Potential conflicts in the 1990s include the triple scourge of militant nationalism, xenophobia and intolerance. The daily reports of senseless killing in former Yugoslavia are sad reminders of how much remains to be done in dealing with the transition to democracy, tolerance and coexistence.

In order to deal with these new security problems we need a range of effective means and mechanisms for crisis management and conflict prevention. The decision at the Helsinki follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation to establish a peace-keeping capability for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) represents an important step forward. By making it possible to draw upon the resources of institutions

(Mr. Saether, Norway)

such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Western European Union and the European Community, the CSCE participating States have by this decision translated the concept of interlocking institutions into practical reality.

The option of peacekeeping activities of various kinds should in our view be a key element of the overall conflict prevention and crisis management capability of the CSCE. This would be a useful supplement to the peace-keeping role of the United Nations and should at all times be carried out in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The Summit in Helsinki also set in motion the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. The regime established under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe constitutes a cornerstone of the new European architecture. It epitomizes a qualitatively new stage in European security relations. At the same time it provides insurance against another build up of conventional armaments with offensive capabilities, and codifies the stated intention of the States parties to the Treaty to live in peace.

We warmly welcome the important decision of the CSCE Helsinki follow-up meeting to establish a CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation. The Forum, which was opened in Vienna on 22 September, is charged with giving new impetus to the process of arms control, disarmament and confidence and security-building, to enhance consultation and cooperation on security matters as well as to promote the process of reducing the risk of conflict. Its mandate thus reflects the security-policy challenges we are faced with in the new Europe.

(Mr. Saether, Norway)

In the area of conventional-arms control, the Forum represents a new departure. One major feature is that all States of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) are called upon to participate on an equal footing. The rationale for limiting arms control negotiations to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the former members of the Warsaw Pact no longer exists. The process of harmonizing the obligations of participating States under existing treaties and politically binding documents is one of the issues which will be given priority. The objective would be to ensure that the participants ultimately achieved the highest possible degree of homogeneity with regard to rights and obligations, thus laying a common foundation for further development of the arms control process.

We are also witnessing unprecedented developments in nuclear-arms control and disarmament. The Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty) and the agreement on further significant cuts in strategic nuclear arms announced by President Bush and President Yeltsin in June this year are of paramount importance. The implementation of these commitments will strengthen strategic stability by removing, inter alia, the land-based multiple-warhead intercontinental ballistic missiles, which are the most destabilizing systems.

The conclusion of a draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction is a historic achievement in the field of multilateral arms control and disarmament. The chemical weapons Convention will ban an entire category of weapons, thus contributing to the non-proliferation of chemical weapons. It also provides for the elimination of existing arsenals.

(Mr. Saether, Norway)

The Convention is the first global multilateral disarmament agreement with an effective verification regime allowing on-site inspections of any facility suspected of non-compliance. The Convention will make a substantial contribution to international peace and security. When implemented it will aiso increase regional confidence and stability. In our view, the Convention will promote expanded international trade, technological development and economic cooperation in the chemical sector and thereby advance the economic interests of all States parties.

The Conference on Disarmament deserves great credit for having finalized the Convention. In particular, we congratulate this year's Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, and his team.

Norway was one of the original sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1, on chemical weapons, which calls upon all States to become parties to the Convention at the earliest possible date. It is encouraging to note that more than 130 countries are now sponsors of the draft resolution. No efforts should be spared in the coming weeks to reach a consensus draft resolution in the Committee.

Norway will work actively in the months to come to seek universal adherence to the Convention. We are committed to early accession to the Treaty and urge all States to adhere to it, thus making the Convention an effective instrument for international security.*

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* Mr. Patokallio (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Saether, Norway)

Like previous speakers, we look forward to the signing ceremony in Paris at the beginning of next year and the preparatory work at The Hague in the future Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We welcome the selection of The Hague as the seat of the future organization.

In connection with the preparation of the chemical weapons Convention, Norway has for the last decade submitted technical field studies to the Conference on Disarmament on verification of possible use of chemical weapons. We are now offering a training programme for experts and scholars from developing countries related to the implementation of the Convention.

The international disarmament agenda is far from exhausted by the conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention. Another question that should be addressed urgently by the Conference on Disarmament is that of a nuclear-test ban. Progress has been made in this area by the moratoriums on nuclear testing announced by Russia and France. The suspension of testing by the United States is promising.

We now have a historic opportunity to make significant progress as regards the test-ban issue. It is our hope that the positive developments we have seen in this field will make it possible to achieve a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty by the middle of this decade. The conclusion of such a treaty is essential in order to halt effectively the vertical as well as the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Only a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty would put an end to the danger of contaminating the environment with radioactive substances released by nuclear explosions, particularly in ecologically vulnerable environments such as the Arctic.

Environmental and health risks associated with underground nuclear testing were emphasized by a recent publication prepared on the initiative of the Norwegian Foreign Minister, Mr. Thorvald Stoltenberg, on questions related

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to a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. According to that report, the main argument for such a treaty is the environmental effects of continued nuclear testing and the dangers of nuclear proliferation.

The Conference on Disarmament, being the only multilateral body dealing with disarmament issues, has a particular responsibility in the negotiation of a comprehensive test ban treaty. Norway will continue to support the Conference as the appropriate forum to deal with this issue. We regret that the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban was not re-established during this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament. We are again this year sponsoring the traditional draft resolution on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, requesting the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its substantive work on the matter.

In the Conference on Disarmament my country has actively participated in the preparation of a verification regime for a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The Norwegian Seismic Array (NORSAR) has played a key role in this regard since its establishment in 1968. The network that has been proposed by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts could form an essential part of the future verification system of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the only global instrument through which States can make a formal commitment not to acquire or to assist other States in acquiring nuclear weapons. It is especially encouraging that a number of States have recently acceded to the non-proliferation Treaty, among them the nuclear-weapon States China and France. We warmly welcome this development. At the same time, we call upon all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty.

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It is also essential that the safeguards control system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) be further strengthened and that the Agency be provided with adequate financial resources to maintain a credible level of supervision.

The preparatory process of the next Review Conference of the NPT, in 1995, is now being initiated. In 1995 a decision must be taken, in accordance with Article X of the NPT, on whether the Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely or shall be extended for an additional period or periods. Norway favours an indefinite extension of the Treaty. We look forward to participating actively in the preparatory process of the Review Conference.

The commitment in the Lisbon agreement by the new republics in the former Soviet Union to adhere to the NPT is an important step towards universal adherence to the Treaty. We welcome the commitments made by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear weapons States as soon as possible, and to remove all remaining nuclear weapons from their territory during the implementation period of the START Treaty. The early ratification of these Treaties by all concerned is now essential.

We are encouraged by the progress that has been made thus far to ensure the safe and secure transport, storage and dismantling of nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union. In the years to come this will remain a high-priority issue.

(Mr. Saether, Norway)

Experience gained from the Gulf war demonstrate that there is a need for control of the transfer of high-technology products, know-how and services related to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. The work carried out by the United Nations Special Commission in Iraq shows how the United Nations can play a significant role in non-proliferation matters.

Control of weapons technology, particularly nuclear technology, is a global concern which is becoming increasingly urgent. At the same time, norms on guidelines for the transfer of technology with military applications should take into account legitimate requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while ensuring that they do not deny access to high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes. In fact, the exchange of scientific and technological know-how for social and economic development should be encouraged. In addition, technology can be used to enhance the possibilities for verification of compliance with arms control and disarmament agreements.

The multilateral export control regimes established by the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) support all of these objectives. The predominant task of these regimes is to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Norway supports the further strengthening of the MTCR and encourages all countries to adopt these guidelines. An appeal to that effect was adopted at the Oslo plenary meeting last summer, extending the MTCR guidelines to cover missiles capable of delivering all kinds of weapons of mass destruction.

Last year's decision to establish a universal Register of arms transfers under the auspices of the United Nations is of the utmost importance. The

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Register will promote greater openness and transparency in international arms transfers and help to discourage destabilizing sales. One of the major prerequisites to guarantee the effective functioning of the register is universal participation in the reporting system.

In this regard, we welcome the results of the deliberations of the panel of governmental experts. The technical procedures recommended, including a standardized reporting system, are important for the effective operation of the Register and should be implemented accordingly.

We are all encouraged by the recent political developments which ought to make possible further shifts in our priorities with regard to allocation of resources - away from armaments and towards sustainable development in all parts of the world. Hopefully, the peace dividend, so often mentioned in solemn speeches, can become more of a practical reality in the years to come.

After the end of the cold war and the dramatic changes in the international political landscape, there is a need to review the international mechanisms for consultations and negotiations on disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament is undertaking a thorough review of its effective functioning, agenda and membership. We appreciate the fact that observer countries are invited to participate in these consultations, conducted by Ambassador Servais of Belgium. Among the issues that in our view should be considered for inclusion on the Conference's future agenda are a comprehensive test ban treaty, transparency in armaments and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The membership of the Conference should be expanded without further delay. Since 1986 Norway has been the endorsed candidate of the Western Group to become a full member of the Conference. Our keen interest in the work of the Conference remains undiminished and has been demonstrated throughout the

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years. We appreciate the statements made in plenary meetings by several delegations, including the European Community, regarding the early enlargement of the Conference. We for our part are ready to assume all the responsibilities that full membership entails.

Mr. REKA (Albania) (interpretation from French): I should like, on behalf of the Albanian delegation, to congratulate Mr. Elaraby on his election as Chairman of the First Committee of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. I should also like to take this opportunity to welcome all the other members of the Bureau and to assure the Chairman of the support of the Alabanian delegation during this session.

Two years ago the overthrow of communism in Eastern Europe marked the beginning of a new era in international relations. The cold war, which caused so much harm to the international climate, has given way to a general spirit of cooperation and international security. The bipolar equilibrium established during the years of the cold war was based on the danger of the use of enormous quantities of weapons, and especially on the nuclear threat. It is clear that security, peace and stability cannot be long-lasting if they are based on threats. True security must be based on broad cooperation guiding relations between small and large countries, on respect for human rights and the right of peoples to self-determination, and on the elimination of crises and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The new realities established after the cold war are promising, but this does not mean that there are no problems. In certain cases and in certain countries, these realities are accompanied by serious crises and bloody conflicts that have resulted in the loss of many human lives and untold destruction, deeply shaking peoples' faith.

(Mr. Reka, Albania)

The confrontation between the two blocs has been replaced by a spirit of general cooperation, especially within the framework of the United Nations, for the maintenance and defence of peace. So far, reality has consistently demonstrated how difficult it is to resolve problems inherited from the past and has also shown that forecasts do not always come true.

Albania welcomed and fully supports all the initiatives and commitments of the European Community and the United Nations to put an end to regional conflicts, of which there are unfortunately more than one in Europe, and especially to the conflict in Yugoslavia, where bloodshed has been going on for some time. Nationalism, which arose following the dismantling of multinational, ex-communist empires, is threatening international stability and security and has become a major challenge to the new world order that we are now trying to establish.

Furthermore, the transformations taking place in the Eastern European countries bear out the fact that the process of restructuring, establishing democratic institutions and establishing market economies is much more difficult than had been foreseen. They are accompanied by considerable unknown difficulties, which cannot be overcome without greater international cooperation and more support from the developed countries.

The financial resources made available by the reduction in enormous military expenditures, which at the same time posed a danger to the countries of which I speak, can be used much more effectively to help countries in transition cope with their many difficulties. The Albanian delegation believes that there can be no security or peace without economic progress and development for all countries.

(Mr. Reka, Albania)

Albania is a small country that has suffered too much from the confrontation between the blocs, the climate created by the cold war and its long, self-imposed international isolation. It has set out with determination on the path of democratic transformation, and hopes to overcome the considerable difficulties involved, with the support of the international community and in particular of the developed countries. Albania supports, and will continue to support, all initiatives that promote peace and progress.

We note that there is growing acceptance of the general idea that international security cannot be established by military means, but is, first, the sum total of global economic and social development and universal respect for human rights. Poverty and lack of development of material resources are among those elements that put international security at constant risk.

(Mr. Reka, Albania)

In the same way, non-respect for human rights, especially the rights of minorities and entire peoples, is one cause of regional conflicts and crises and of insecurity in general. There is a shared historical responsibility to cooperate in order to find just and lasting solutions to these global problems and thus ensure stability.

Recent developments prove that there does exist the good will to make progress towards establishing true collective security. Weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons and nuclear weapons are so abundant that instead of safeguarding peace they in fact jeopardize security. To a certain extent the total destruction of nuclear weapons and the limitation of conventional weapons can be considered general priorities for the achievement of global security and for the creation of the necessary confidence-building measures.

Efforts to develop a new security system must also take into account regional considerations. Regional bodies and their structures, the creation of confidence-building measures and regional disarmament initiatives are of great importance for the establishment of a global system of international security. In this context I should stress the importance of preventive diplomacy in precluding or eliminating crises and regional conflicts.

We believe that if the international community had paid more attention to the appeals made by various countries, especially neighbouring countries, and if immediate preventive diplomatic measures had been taken, the tragic conflict in Yugoslavia could have been contained and perhaps avoided. In that context, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the danger involved in the escalation of the aggressive Serbian policy. It challenges all international achievements in the field of international law, and, by the use of force, its proponents strive to assure themselves of the acquisition of

(Mr. Reka, Albania)

as much territory as possible, at the expense of other peoples of former Yugoslavia. Albania welcomed and firmly supported all the measures adopted by the Security Council and other relevant organs with a view to halting that frenetic military machine that runs the risk of upsetting the entire continent. The consequences of the conflict spreading to Kosovo would be unimaginable and would be a serious threat to peace and stability in the Balkans and beyond. The international community, in particular its authoritative body, the United Nations, must urgently adopt the necessary preventive measures to avoid a conflict of such dimensions, which would be disastrous - and that not only for the peoples who live there.

While expressing our pleasure that the risk of nuclear confrontation has lessened, we cannot speak of a long-term peace policy in view of the various terrible ethnic conflicts we are witnessing today. Armaments control and the registration of arms transfers are of great importance for the avoidance of possible armed confrontations. It is clear that the reduction of nuclear arms on the part of the Russian Federation and the United States of America and the successful conclusion of the Geneva talks on the prohibition of chemical weapons are to be welcomed. We should have liked regional disarmament to be dealt with as well and hope that it will be.

Albania has given its unreserved support for initiatives to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction. We have also hailed the Conference on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons under the chairmanship of Ambassador Ritter von Wagner for the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and Their Destruction. We believe the Convention to be of historic importance.

(Mr. Reka, Albania)

Albania is one of the 133 sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1 and will also be one of the first signatories of the Convention when it is opened for signing in Paris in January of 1993.

Mr. GOONETILLEKE (Sri Lanka): At the outset, on behalf of the Sri Lanka delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Being familiar with your wide-ranging diplomatic experience and your long association with disarmament negotiations both in Geneva and here in New York, we are confident of your successful stewardship of the First Committee. My delegation will extend to you its fullest cooperation in fulfilling the task with which you have been entrusted.

Our debate on disarmament and security issues is taking place at a time of profound change in relations within and between States. While the positive direction of those changes is welcome, the instabilities inherent in transition have brought out uncertainty and new issues of concern. These concerns touch upon a spectrum of issues dealing with disarmament and security matters.

The policy debate in the General Assembly and the ongoing discussion, both within and outside the United Nations, concerning the challenges and opportunities those changes entail have brought out one common theme: multilateralism has been freed from cold-war captivity. Multilateralism is the best way to move forward if we are to build an edifice of peace and security in a more humane world. Under-Secretary-General Petrovsky, in his opening remarks rightly referred to "a pax United Nations" (A/C.1/47/PV.3, pp. 9-10) as the political framework of a viable world order in which security is ensured and understood as a more integrated concept than was hitherto the case. A concept of highly armed security, which tended to overwhelm inter-State relations during the cold-war era, is now giving way to a more

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

comprehensive understanding of security. Disarmament and arms limitation will be key components of this security equation.

Although the ending of the cold war and the movement away from the old concepts of security have been greeted with justifiable enthusiasm, the transition to a more cooperative and equitable security order will not be easy. While the residual disarmament problems of the cold-war era remain on our agenda, new conflicts have arisen requiring both disarmament and political approaches for their resolution. These new issues have not been confined to a particular region of the world. The United Nations is being called upon to bring to bear its authority and competence to address these questions whether they relate to unresolved issues of overarmament during the cold war or to new concerns arising from conflict situations around the world.

Our discussions at this session of the First Committee should therefore address both sets of issues. The high visibility of emerging issues cannot mask the importance of unresolved issues such as nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation in all its aspects, and global and regional approaches to conventional disarmament, including illicit arms trade with irregular groups. We are optimistic that the resurgent spirit of cooperation will help to promote the process of multilateral negotiation in the field of disarmament. This will be a logical corollary to the wide-ranging political agenda for peace, security and development in the twenty-first century. It is also an imperative deriving from the acceptance of the idea that peace and security, as an integrated concept, should take into account the interests and concerns of all States. It is in this context that my delegation has long advocated the need for multilateral bodies such as the Conference on Disarmament to address conventional disarmament questions without prejudice to the priority attached to nuclear-arms issues.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

Despite the pessimism expressed by some in the past, multilateral forums have demonstrated their efficacy in producing disarmament agreements of universal appeal. The draft Convention on chemical weapons, which is before the General Assembly, is proof of the competence and dynamism of multilateral disarmament negotiations. The complex nature of the issues involved and the relevant compromises achieved attest to the wisdom of involving wider participation in disarmament negotiations. The draft Convention does not reflect the preferred positions of many countries, including mine. However, it demonstrates that consensus is possible through negotiation, with undiminished security for all States as its ultimate target.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

Sri Lanka is pleased to be a sponsor of the draft resolution on the Convention on chemical weapons. As a country pledged to be an original signatory to the Convention, we hope to play an active role in the work of the organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons. Once the Convention enters into force we expect that the legitimate commercial activities of States will not be constrained by procedures extraneous to the Convention. We therefore expect that steps will be taken by the industrialized countries to remove unilateral discriminatory restrictions that exist on the transfer of chemical technology, materials and equipment for peaceful and development purposes.

The achievement of the Convention will be of historic significance not only because it eliminates an entire class of weapons of mass destruction but also because it sets new multilateral standards in verification and compliance. The outcome of negotiations once again illustrated what was always obvious but regrettably ignored for a long time. It demonstrated that the setting of international standards on common security issues should devolve from the few to the many. Military significance cannot be the sole criterion for participation in disarmament negotiations.

Sri Lanka is pleased to see positive developments concerning one of the priority items on our agenda, namely, a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. We welcome the moratoriums adopted by three nuclear-weapon States. The accession to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) by two nuclear-weapon States augurs well for further progress in this important subject. The political impetus provided by the partial test-ban Treaty amendment process and these positive developments have created an atmosphere conducive to negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We therefore urge the Conference on

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Disarmament to seize this opportunity and commence negotiations at its next session with a view to concluding a total ban on nuclear testing. A complete ban would remain an effective barrier to the development of new types of nuclear weapons and to the emergence of more nuclear-weapon States. Progress in this area would promote the strengthening of the NPT regime and would be viewed by the States parties to the Treaty as a concrete contribution to the success of the 1995 Conference.

In the wake of new developments on the international scene, including the sudden increase in the number of potential nuclear-weapon States, greater importance is being attached to non-proliferation issues. As a party to the NPT, Sri Lanka has always considered the Treaty to be an important instrument for ensuring international peace and security. We share the view that the NPT needs to be strengthened and its longevity assured. It is therefore essential that all States parties, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, continue to implement Treaty obligations in all aspects. We look forward to the 1995 Conference as an occasion for recording greater progress in nuclear disarmament and wider and more effective adherence to non-proliferation.

Measures for appropriate arrangements to protect non-nuclear-weapon States from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a matter of paramount importance to these States. While agreeing upon the complexity of the issues involved, we see no justification for the non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly those who are parties to the NPT, to live under a perpetual cloud of nuclear attack. Sri Lanka hopes that there will be progress in this field when the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament meets in 1993.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

Another important area that remains on the disarmament agenda is transparency in armaments and the related question of the Register of Conventional Arms. Transparency constitutes an integral part of the global disarmament process, and the rights and responsibilities of States participating in any effective transparency regime should be equal and balanced. Such a framework should also take account of the delicate line between excessive accumulation and legitimate internal defence procurement of member States.

A major force of instability and insecurity affecting the smaller countries is the illicit arms trade, which continues to sustain a vicious cycle of terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling. At a time when nations are scaling down their armament inventories, the international community has not yet even ascertained the magnitude of illicit arms trade involving various irregular groups which indulge in violent activities against democratic societies. The international agenda for conflict prevention and any monitoring regime therefore should also address the destabilizing effects of illicit arms trade with a view to its elimination. The concern expressed in resolution 46/36 L over the "destabilizing and destructive effects of the illicit arms trade" is borne out by the frequent occurrence of terrorist-inspired violence in many parts of the world. The follow-up action to the transparency initiative, including its possible future expansion, should therefore take into account these real concerns and security threats experienced by a large number of countries.

On the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, my delegation hopes that the very useful cumulative work done by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva will be built upon. Confidence-building with respect

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to outer space activities appears to be a particularly good starting-point. This approach could facilitate measures progressively ensuring that outer space will not become an arena for further military applications where nations with space capabilities will either cooperate or compete to deploy high-technology weapons. Space-launch capabilities have continued to grow and spread. At a time when proliferation issues are being highlighted as emerging concerns, it would be more prudent to take preventive measures before weapons proliferation takes place in outer space, requiring more complex and less verifiable non-proliferation measures in that environment. My delegation looks forward to a constructive resolution on this subject which will enable the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament to work towards a more focused treatment of the substantive aspects.

Recent developments have highlighted regionalism as a means of promoting amity, cooperation and regional peace and security in several parts of the world. Several conflict situations that prevail in different parts of the globe have not prevented the quest for regional integration and the common welfare of the peoples from gaining ground.

In the same vein, the efforts of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to establish a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region have continued. Given the changes in the landscape of international security and the new spirit of cooperation, we feel that an opportunity now exists to make progress towards this long desired objective. My delegation is pleased that a consensus was achieved in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean this year to pursue the objective of a zone of peace through new alternative approaches commensurate with the emerging international situation.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

We are optimistic that a resolution based on this constructive spirit would enable the Ad Hoc Committee to pursue collective action aimed at realizing a goal we all share, namely, peace, security and cooperation in the Indian Ocean region, which will complement the ongoing global efforts to achieve a more secure and more peaceful world.

Lastly, as we focus attention on various aspects of our agenda, which still remains a heavy one, one theme pervades all our efforts. Peace and security are the right and responsibility of all nations. These collective objectives should be pursued in the true spirit of multilateralism and on the basis of the sovereign equality of States. The efforts of the United Nations in addressing major disarmament and arms-control issues constitute an indispensable element of conflict-prevention strategies. They need to be pursued with due regard for the security concerns of all States, rather than the perceptions of a few. Multilateral negotiations will therefore play an important role in standard-setting in this complex but essential area of inter-State relations. The First Committee's deliberations can provide the directions and perspectives for such negotiations.

Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Uruguay) (interpretation from Spanish): If there is anything that has emerged clearly from the debate of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, and in particular from the work of the First Committee, it is the widespread conviction that there has never been a more propitious or more critical moment for setting up a system of international security genuinely based on cooperation.

Now that the cold war is over, what is the true meaning of the concept of security? The answer, as the Secretary-General says in "An Agenda for Peace", is not simple. The world has lost the illusory simplicity and the seeming order that resulted from the status quo imposed on it by bipolar balance.

(Mr. Píriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

At the present time, at this very moment, there are more than 30 armed conflicts going on in various parts of the world. Others could break out at any time. All these conflicts have their own deep-seated causes, but they are all part of a general pattern in which ethnic, national, religious or other differences are made more acute by serious economic and social imbalances.

Responsibility for resolving and preventing such conflicts rests primarily with the parties to a dispute, but at the same time, it also rests with all States of the international community, with regional organizations and, most assuredly, with the United Nations. This is the mandate that we, the peoples of the world, must carry out.

The means available to us are those defined by the Secretary-General in his report, namely, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping, reconstruction after conflicts, and most certainly,

"in the largest sense, to address the deepest causes of conflict",

(A/47/277, para. 15)

that is to say, the urgent implementation of an agenda for development.

The existence of democratic societies, the rule of international law, which would include the principles of the Charter, the reduction of economic and social imbalances through cooperation for development, and a more just world trade order, are all interrelated parts which, taken together, represent an overall concept of collective security.

So long as there are nuclear, chemical or bacteriological weapons in the world, the annihilation of the human species is an objective possibility. So long as there are excessive and destructive stockpiles of conventional weapons and an irresponsible transfer of weapons to hotbeds of tension, there can be no stability.

(Mr. Píriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

Disarmament is not an end in itself, but it is one of the primary expressions of preventive diplomacy, and it occupies an essential place in our international agenda. The United Nations meets the necessary conditions for catalysing and channelling the disarmament process.

United Nations peace efforts have expanded over the past few years, and the Organization has engaged in varied disarmament activities that have brought effective and concrete results. Its work in the supervision, control and verification of the disarming of armies and factions in recent peace-keeping operations and the activities of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) show that the United Nations has a major potential in this area.

For all these reasons, my delegation agrees completely with what the representative of Canada, Ambassador Peggy Mason, said the other day about the need for a second part to "An Agenda for Peace", a part aimed at enhancing the role of the United Nations in the area of disarmament.

The year 1991 and the past months of 1992 have witnessed advances in the areas of arms reduction and disarmament. Some of those advances have been spectacular.

We welcome the ongoing unprecedented reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the United States and Russia, and we hope that the cutbacks announced in June by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin can soon be embodied in a legal instrument. We also hope that this trend will gather momentum and that the other nuclear States will adopt similar measures.

The essential objective must continue to be comprehensive nuclear disarmament. In the meantime, nuclear non-proliferation remains a pressing priority issue.

(Mr. Píriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

France and China, the two permanent members of the Security Council which were not parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, have acceded to it this year. The importance of that fact cannot be overestimated, especially with regard to the implementation of article VI of the Treaty and to the prospects for implementing effective measures to provide both positive and negative security guarantees for non-nuclear States.

The accession of South Africa and the signing of the safeguards agreement by North Korea are important steps towards the universal applicability of the non-proliferation Treaty. No less important are the announcements by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine that they have decided to become non-nuclear parties to the Treaty. We hope that this will become a reality very soon.

The universality and applicability of the non-proliferation Treaty are fundamental, but it is equally essential that the Treaty should not be viewed as a means solely for freezing and perpetuating a discriminatory situation which is potentially destabilizing. For that reason, Uruguay has high hopes and expectations for the Conference which will be held in 1995.

(Mr. Píriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

In the area of non-proliferation, Latin America and the Caribbean have made a contribution that will in the near future turn our region into the first truly nuclear-weapon-free zone. The amendments to the Treaty of Tlatelolco that were approved during the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America set in motion the process of fully integrating Argentina, Brazil and Chile into the system. We urge other States in the region to follow their example.

Together with the progress in this field, we welcome France's ratification of Additional Protocol I. The ideal of a fully effective nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean seems now - a little more than 25 years after the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco - to be within reach.

The moratoriums on nuclear testing that have been announced by Russia, France and the United States constitute a fundamental change which gives solid grounds for hope of a complete cessation of testing. It is a very important step towards ending vertical proliferation, and we hope that the example will be followed by other nuclear-weapon States. At the same time, this fortunate development could give new impetus to the consultations that are being held, under the leadership of the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, in connection with the partial test-ban Treaty Amendment Conference.

Uruguay attaches high priority to the early entry into force of the Convention on chemical weapons. This Convention - for the first time ever - declares such weapons to be unlawful and eliminates, in a verifiable way, a whole category of destructive weapons that have had a sorry, indeed odious, history throughout this century. In the Conference on Disarmament a consensus was reached after much hard work, and it seems to us essential that the First

(Mr. Píriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

Committee adopt draft resolution A/C.1/47/L.1, of which my country has the honour to be a sponsor.

Last year the First Committee set a precedent when it demonstrated that, where the political will exists, the Committee can control events, rather than simply reacting to them. The establishment of a Register of Conventional Arms is an example of transparency and a means of building confidence on a global scale. It is not an end in itself, but if we can make it universal it will be a key instrument in the setting of responsible criteria for both the purchase and the sale of weapons. We welcome the conclusions of the group of experts that drew up the formulas that will make it possible for this instrument to come into force in April 1993.

The Register will be an incomplete tool that will achieve its end only partially if it does not include and define the ways and means of expanding its scope by the addition of further categories of weapons and the inclusion of data on the existence and national production of war matériel. The establishment of the Register was a decisive step. We hope for equally constructive expressions of political will in respect of other, no less important, items on the First Committee's agenda.

For the past few years the Committee has been making progress in the rationalization of its work. The smaller number of its resolutions and the greater substance of their contents, together with the increased percentage of resolutions adopted without a vote, decisively prove this. The amalgamation, this year, of the debate on international security and the debate on disarmament has enabled us to strengthen this trend.

It must be recognized that further improvements can be made - especially with regard to the format of our agenda, many of whose items continue to adhere to a historical order that is not entirely logical. We must also try

(Mr. Píriz-Ballon, Uruguay)

to secure further progress with regard to our schedule and our method of work. We are convinced that, under your leadership, Mr. Chairman, we shall make great progress on this and the other important items on our agenda. You may rest assured that we are determined to cooperate fully in this effort.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.